

There really aren't enough words to describe Melissa's contributions to my office and to my success in serving the people of Michigan over these many years. She has been the go-to person on my team to mentor new staff, handle challenging cases, and answer those questions that don't seem to fall into anyone else's job description.

We all wish Melissa continued success and happiness with her family as she begins this new chapter in her life, joining her husband, Tim, in full-time retirement.

Her friendship and commitment to me and to the people of Michigan have been immeasurable, as is my gratitude for her decades of service. While my staff and I will miss her presence in our office, she will forever be an invaluable member and leader of "Team Stabe-now."

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### REMEMBERING HACKETT MAYOR JEFF T. HARPER

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the life and legacy of the mayor of Hackett, AR, Jeff Harper, who passed away on Thursday, November 5, 2015.

Affectionately known as Papa Bear to many, Mayor Harper dedicated his life to serving the citizens of Hackett. Mayor Harper worked for the street department and served as a firefighter for a decade, eventually becoming the fire chief of Hackett. His commitment to the city of Hackett led him to run for mayor. He was elected in 2014 and served Hackett honorably the entirety of his all too short time in office.

I am greatly appreciative for Mayor Harper's noble service to the city of Hackett and the State of Arkansas. My prayers are with his wife Trini, his three children, and all those who are mourning him during this trying time. I hope they find comfort knowing that he made a positive impact on his community.●

##### TRIBUTE TO LARRY ZIMMER

• Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I wish to honor the voice of CU Buffalo football, Mr. Larry Zimmer, who will be calling his last game and celebrating his 80th birthday on November 13.

Mr. Zimmer joined the University of Colorado broadcasting team in 1971. He has since led a career filled with many awards and distinctions, which highlight his dedication to CU sports. He is a five-time winner of the Colorado Sportscaster of the Year award and recipient of the esteemed Chris Schenkel Award, given to those who dedicate their talents to college football. Even more important than these awards, however, is the respect and admiration he has earned from the students and faculty at the University of Colorado and all those who tune in to Buffalo football.

Over his long and distinguished career, he has truly become a hallmark of CU football games. I thank him for his many years of excellent broadcasting and wish him a very happy birthday.●

##### WELCOMING RITCHIE COUNTY VETERANS TO THE NATION'S CAPITAL

• Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I wish to recognize with, overwhelming pride, a group of courageous veterans from Ritchie County, WV, who are visiting our Nation's Capital this Thursday. On behalf of our State and Nation, it is a true honor and privilege to recognize these heroic men and women and their families for their brave service and sacrifice as they tour the memorials built in their honor.

I have always said that West Virginia is one of the most patriotic States in this great Nation, and we are so proud of the number of veterans and Active-Duty members who have served our country with honor and distinction. The 20 veterans and their family members who are traveling to Washington, DC, embody our State's history and contributions to the freedom of this Nation. They may represent different generations of warriors, but no matter the war or the era, no matter the rank, each and every one of them courageously answered the call of duty to defend our Nation and protect the freedoms we enjoy as Americans. In our time of need, they stepped forward and said, "I'll do it—I'll protect this country."

This trip will be a truly moving and special experience for these veterans, many of whom have never been to the memorials that were built for their service. It will include wreath-laying ceremonies at the monuments that commemorate the wars in which many have served, including the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Korean War Veterans Memorial, and the National World War II Memorial. They will also be touring Arlington National Cemetery and have private time for a wreath-laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Mr. President, it is also tremendously important to recognize that this visit would not have been possible without the hard work and determination of an inspirational young Ritchie County native, Kirsten Seese. Kirsten is a Ritchie County High School senior who aspires to be a nurse one day. She was inspired to coordinate this trip as her prenursing senior project after hearing about a group of veterans that had recently traveled to Washington, DC, to visit the memorials sponsored by their community.

Kirsten wasted no time. She went to businesses in Ritchie County with the goal of organizing a 100 percent free veterans appreciation tour. In just 3 weeks, Kirsten raised enough money for 20 veterans, their family members, and local volunteers to visit to Washington, DC, absolutely free. They will

not have to pay for any meals or refreshments and will receive a commemorative shirt and a hat. The funding will also go towards the wreaths for the ceremonies that will be held at each memorial and a group photo at the Capitol to commemorate their special day.

I am so proud of Kirsten. She has truly set an extraordinary example for her generation by giving back to those who have served this country and those who have protected our freedoms. It is the devotion and drive of young people like Kirsten that bring our communities together. I wish her the best of luck in her future endeavors, and I commend her for making an enormous impact on the lives of our veterans through this veterans appreciation tour.

Mr. President, I am filled with pride every time I meet the patriots who have served our country, and I am so pleased to welcome West Virginia's most courageous veterans who are all heroes to Washington, DC. I encourage all of my colleagues to join me in saluting them. They truly inspire us all as we are reminded of their selfless service. It is because of their bravery that all Americans enjoy the greatest liberties and freedoms in the world. We whole heartedly thank them.●

##### TRIBUTE TO JUDGE GEORGE HEALY

• Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to a Rhode Islander whom I have known and admired for nearly 30 years: George Healy, chief judge of our State's Workers' Compensation Court, who retired in July after 24 years on the bench. A number of George's colleagues will be gathering on November 19 to honor his years of service, and it is indeed my honor to say a few words about him today.

I first came to know George Healy amidst a genuine crisis in Rhode Island: the near-collapse of our State's workers' compensation system in 1991. Here is how a 1991 report by the Rhode Island Department of Economic Development summed up the situation.

The financial burden borne by employers had simply become too great. Insurers had begun to exit the Rhode Island marketplace. And, most importantly, the financial protection required for our state's injured workers was being placed in jeopardy.

Indeed, when compared with our New England neighbors, our average claim costs were through the roof. In 1990, the average claim in Rhode Island was \$12,638, more than three times higher than the average claim in Vermont and significantly higher than Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire, which collectively had average claim costs in the range of \$6,000 to \$7,000. This was simply unsustainable.

Enter George Healy who until that time had been a civil litigator and workers' compensation practitioner. Our Governor at the time, Bruce